NAMELESS SONGS

WILLIAM H. BAKER

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Dedicated to those generous friends who have found, some here, some there, a message among these simple thoughts which had been given expression with the intention only of laying them away in memory's chest where the things of life, both joyous and sad, are garnered.

FOREWORD

I am loth to name these waifs of mine as I release them to go their many ways for should it happen that any among them finds sanctuary with some kindred spirit, such an one will give the waif a name that will express what it comes to mean to that one, alone. It is only thus they could hope to be understood. Their merit, if any they have, lies not in their faces nor their forms but deep in their hearts which they would open to you more fully than I have been able to help them do by my efforts to give them expression.

And if it be that any of them should fail to find such refuge, then it can return to me as it went, for we understand each other with a sympathy and an indulgence it might be presumptous to expect from others.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Now, waifs of mine! Go forth and sing
The songs you've sung to me;
For you will find souls more attuned
To catch your melody.
And thus your songs will find a voice
As true as it needs be.

NAMELESS SONGS

I close my eyes in reverie
For a sail to a distant land.
I float along a dreamy sea
'Till I come to a golden strand.

* * * *

Could I but paint the scenes I see;
Could I but play the melody;
Perhaps I'd understand.

NAMELESS SONGS

Could I but sing the song that cheers
And serves to drive away one's fears;
Or speak the word to reach one's heart;
Or heal the wound; or soothe the smart.
Could I but take the outcast in
And have him trust me with his sin.
Could I do this, with right intent,
I'd count my days for Thee well spent.

NAMELESS SONGS

I sing the song of the broad highway:
That's open to you and me;
That starts in the mist of yesterday
And leads to eternity.
It bears the prints of the Lowly One
Who traveled the way alone
To point the path to victory won
At the foot of Mercy's Throne.
And following Him in an endless stream
Are the poor and halt and blind;
Nor murmur so that they catch a gleam;
Nor that they straggle behind.

I sing the song of a faith that lives;
That's offered to you and me;
That throbs with the joy of life it gives,
And a greater one to be.
It bears the marks of the constant stings
That faith must always endure.
It wavers at times in face of things
That passing leave one more sure.
And ever it points the way ahead
And tempers us to the load.
And 'tis thus I sing not of the dead
But life on the endless road.

NAMELESS
SONGS

And, as I looked, I saw them come and go
Along the trampled road; some East; some West.
Some swung by with springing step; some were slow.
Some strode on with anxious look; some would rest.

And so they came and went from dawn to dusk;
And dusk to dawn; for some passed in the night.
Some were blessed with fires of youth; some were husk.
Some were bowed as though with weight; some went light.

And on they moved with joyous laughs, or tears,
Or songs, upon their way; and some with groans.
Some were filled with glowing hopes; some with fears;
Some with music in their souls; some with moans.

And in a group one spoke, as they went by,
Of One Who strains not mercy. Some heard not.
Some there were said it was true; some, a lie.
Some were sad with visionings; some, their lot.

And one stalked by with tempting words, and jeers,
And promise of great joys. Some looked away.
Some turned and walked after him; some, for years.
Some there were with heavy hearts. Some were gay.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

And I saw cross-roads where the paths converged;
And many there who sought to find their way.
Some there were who stood alone; some who urged;
Some who bore the stamp of soul; some, of clay.

And I saw some who came to separate,
And go the ways that never meet again;
Some who searched and waited there; some were late.
Some who once more found their own; some were twain.

And there were some who were afraid to choose
Now that they saw the two ways; and the strife;
Some who feared to venture all; some, to lose;
Some who saw a spectre, Death; some, but Life.

NAMELESS
SONGS

And now the silent night comes with its peace,
Like benediction, to the wearied one
Who through the day has vainly sought release
From growing burden of the things undone.
Now chime the hours when fevered efforts cease
And one's free soul is cringing slave to none.

The tumult dies. The throbbing air is still.
And earth no longer trembles with the tread
Of feet from birth prepared to trudge the mill;
And cries of those who did lament their dead
But now implore the mercy of God's Will
That cleaves the twain so husk may find its bed.

These are God's moments when His searching call
Is ringing through the fluted aisles of space;
And succors those who suffer from the thrall;
And reaches those who have usurped the mace.
Thus, each finds gloom or solace 'waiting all
With promise of acquittance, face to Face.

NAMELESS
SONGS

She sweeps the strings with careless grace;
And laughs with roguish glee.
She sings a song vibrant with life;
And archly smiles at me.
She sends my thoughts a'wandering;
And stirs a dormant strain
That longs to crush her at my breast;
And live old ways again.

And then, she strikes a minor key
That starts a throbbing pain,
As fingers scarce caress the strings
And reach the heights again.
I close my eyes in reverie,
And tumult yields to rest,
As on the mirror of my soul
Stands her I love the best.

NAMELESS SONGS

Dear God! How long? The bitter cup!
I hold it to my lips again.
It flows and fills and bubbles up.
Try as I will I cannot drain,
I cannot stay its crimson flood.

I think I reach its dregs. And then
Far from its depths more constant still
Pours forth the stream. Dear God! Oh when
Shall I be cleansed and know Thy will;
And that my cup but holds Thy Blood?

NAMELESS
SONGS

Father! The cross grows heavy and I bend
Beneath its burden as I near the end.
The path is long; the way unknown to me;
The ascent steep like Thy Gethsemene.
Behind, a gloom; before, a misty veil;
Which does not lift that I may see the trail.
I hasten on and on. I slip. I fall.
I listen for Thy voice. I hear Thy call.

* * * *

The day is dying. Night comes on apace.
Oh, hear me Lord! Oh, show Thy child Thy face!

NAMELESS SONGS

I hear a song of the simple things:
Of humble life and the joy it brings;
Of honest toil; and of honest gains;
And an upright name washed clean of stains;
An open heart that is free from guile;
Lips that carry a radiant smile;
A voice that rings with the truth it speaks;
And eye that flashes the love it seeks.
I'm not attuned to the melody
But I know it's sung for you and me.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Though I'm in a wilderness,
Thou dost hear my prayer.
Though I pass through slough of slime,
Thou dost have a care.
Though I but stretch forth my hand,
Thou dost give me Thine.
Though I do but plead for grace,
Thou dost make the sign.
Though my path lies through the gloom,
Thou dost show the way.
Though the night be long and drear,
Thou wilt bring the day.

NAMELESS
SONGS

A song is in my heart
As evening's shadows lengthen on the trek,
And meet and merge.
A song is in my heart.

A song is in my heart
As I look o'er the weary waste and wreck
Of the sad years.
A song is in my heart.

A song is in my heart
As I go forth 'mid melancholy dirge
And unavailing tears
To the Far Land. And then?
I know naught, save
A song is in my heart.

NAMELESS SONGS

Upon a shore—a Summer's day,
There sat a little lad
Who dreamed, as he looked far away,
Of things he wished he had.
And then, as vision grew intent,
He builded with his hands
A castle, moat, and battlement;
All quarried from the sands.
And with the vision grew the form
Of what it longed to be.
And it was proof against a storm,
As far as he could see.
But now came creeping in the tide
Along the glist'ning beach.
And on and on through stealthy glide,
It moved with greedy reach;
Until it leaped upon its prey,
From out the crested wave;
And ruthlessly it washed away
The dream he fought to save.

* * * *

Ah, little lad! There'll come the day,
As Time has turned the Wheel,
When all thy dreams may pass away;
And Life no pity feel;
And all thy work be swept away
Into another's hands.
And thou shalt hear thy brother say:
"Thou quarried from the sands."

NAMELESS
SONGS

Beside a shaded path unwinding through a wood,
Upon a moss-grown knoll was placed a shrine.
And through the changing seasons trees about it stood
Like sentinels to take the countersign.

And many worshipped there, alone with solitude.
And none but trusted Nature heard their prayers.
And each communion found, adapted to his mood,
That lifted from his heart its weight of cares.

There, were offered up as their sacrificial gifts
The memories of things they held most dear.
There laid each his heart bleeding from its many rifts;
And for his sorrow sought his meed of cheer.

It was, to some, the shrine of dear departed one;
To others, of the pleas for erring kin;
To some, of things to do, or things 'twere best undone;
To others, of a love that might have been.

And as they had their shrine and hearkened to its call,
So do the sons of men all have their own.
Some are secret places; and some are known to all;
And some are like the bud that's not yet blown.

There they all find peace as they look upon the cross,
Symbolic of the burden to be borne.
There the vision glows of requital for all loss:
The coming of the Everlasting Morn.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Were you calling me, dear heart?
Did you come with love-lit eyes?
Did your hand caress my brow?
Did your sweet lips still my sighs?

Almost seems that you were here!
Almost seems I see you now!
I have watched and waited, dear.
Take me where we shall not part!

NAMELESS
SONGS

I know the hour when mother comes to me.
Swift as the light my thought waves rush through space
Until they find her waiting for my call.
And in a flash I see her love-lit face;
And room is filled with fragrance beyond thought;
And light that has no counterpart on earth;
And voice that throbs with melody so pure;
I am abashed with sense of my unworth.

'Tis mother fails me not nor questions me;
Nor dwells upon my faults. She knows my needs
And pulse of mine that beats in her own breast.
And this, with her, is way above all creeds.
It matters not what rankles in my heart
Of bitter thought; or sense of grievous wrong;
Or memory that carries its own shame;
She soothes me with the same old childhood song.

She presses on my lips her sweet caress;
And calms the tumult of my wearied brain.
And, somehow, through her tender, loving touch
Peace follows close upon the passing pain.
The burden lifts; and light dispels the gloom.
The path where duty leads I plainly see.
You say I dream? Well, this is what I know:
It is the hour when mother comes to me.

NAMELESS
SONGS

It's just the humblest sort of place
Where Love and I abide.
The tender vines like shadow lace
Cling to its sheltered side.
The morning glories hold their cup
To catch their drink of dew.
And lazy bees just drone, and sup
The honeysuckles' brew.
It's almost hidden like a nest
Among the shady trees;
Where, 'neath their arms, like something blest
It nestles so at ease.
Its biding place you'd never know
As you go on your quest,
Unless you caught a glimpse or so;
And felt desire to rest.
And as you come the winding way,
It shyly peeps at you;
And then withdraws as with dismay
Because you saw it, too.
And when you pause in ecstasy
As it leaps into view,
Each flower, bird, and nodding tree;
All join to welcome you.
A legend graved above the door
Its message does confide
To those who pass the threshold o'er:
"Here Doth God's Peace Abide."

NAMELESS SONGS

Dear God! If with the dawn of some drear day
I see the things desired, planned for, and wrought;
The pillars of my temple, fall away;
And should my anxious dreams all come to naught;
If love, that trusted to sustain my heart,
When needed most should fail as burden breaks;
If friendship's bond be rudely wrenched apart;
And all thought gained, the turning wheel unmakes;
If then but that Thy faith in me remain
As mine in Thee, I'll not complain nor rue;
But thanking Thee for strength will stand again
And on the ruins will start to build anew.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Life runs a course much like the whirling spheres;
And spells for some a foot-hold in the sun.
And then with some it comes to naught but years;
Or never ending race that must be run;
Or is a spectre that bestirs one's fears,
And wails denial of self in duty done
While telling o'er a rosary of tears.
Life seen by some is but a ruthless fate,
The trap of cunning trickster who decoys.
To some it is an all-sufficient state
Wherein the hours are filled with naught but joys.
To some it is the pathway to the Gate
That means release from endless round that cloys.
And what it is, or means, to you and me;
And if it ends, or is a passing through;
Is Life's own deepest, hidden mystery
That, for reflection, rests on point of view.

NAMELESS
SONGS

A stream is coursing to the West;
I question why it flows.
A man is carried down a road;
I ponder where he goes.
A bird is trilling in a cage;
I wonder that it sings.
A life is in a shrivelled frame;
I marvel why it clings.
A cloud is drifting 'cross the sky.
I'd find the place it seeks.
The wind is moaning in the night;
I'd know the tongue it speaks.
A baby looks with steady gaze;
I'd fathom what it knows.
A youth is laughing on his way;
I ponder what he sows.
A man is voicing words and words;
I wonder what he thinks.
A voice is calling far to me;
I'd glimpse the world it links.
A rose is lavish with its breath;
I'd know the love it tells.
A day I 'wait is 'waiting me;
I wonder what it spells.

NAMELESS SONGS

I saw a man follow a ploughshare;
And the sun scorched him;
And the labor bent him;
But he went on to the end—to the end of the furrow.
There he rested and cooled his brow,
And glanced wistfully back along the furrow he had turned.
Thus he knew where he had departed from the true line.

So man cuts through virgin soil;
Guiding life's ploughshare with uncertain hands;
And makes his own path to the end of the furrow.
There he pauses and renews his strength.
Then on he presses along a new trail.
But he sees the old one and its sinuous course
And marks the rocks that hidden had deflected him.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Wind from thy starting place!
Wind on thy quest!
Wind sweeping 'thwart the sky!
Wind to thy rest!

Man from thy shroud of mist!
Man on thy way!
Man crawling on the earth!
Man naught but clay!

Soul from thy starting place!
Soul on thy quest!
Soul sweeping 'thwart the sky!
Soul to thy rest!

NAMELESS SONGS

I look into your eyes.
Oh, wondrous sight!
And see therein the skies;
And day; and night;
And all the universe.

I look into your eyes.
And, Lo! The soul
Stands forth and mutely cries:
I am the whole
Of love, as from the first.

I look into your eyes
And read the tale
Of love divine, and trust,
That ne'er shall fail.
They tell me o'er and o'er.

I look into your eyes
And see the past.
And watch the future rise
In love to last
'Till time shall be no more.

NAMELESS SONGS

It comes to me that you and I,
In age long past, first met;
For stirs in me a sense of you
With power to thrill me yet.
The way was so bedimmed with mist
Light could not penetrate
The place where paths of you and me
But crossed to separate.
And what we were; and whence we came;
And whither were to go;
And why we met there in the mist:
We surely did not know.
But as you left me in the gloom
There flashed between us, twain,
A sign that's lived all through the years
That we should know again.
And as I kiss your trembling lips;
And hold you to my breast;
I feel a peace pass over me
That brings unwonted rest.
And as I think of all the years,
And all the weary course,
That you and I have known in search;
I marvel at the Force

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

Which, through uncharted seas of space,
Our lines converging drew
'Till you and I should hear the call
And I could come to you.
And now that I have found you, Dear,
I would not let you go;
And by my side and in my arms
Would keep you, always so.
But well we know that comes the day
When Purpose must be served.
Nor all our pleas; nor all our prayers;
Will find it even swerved.
And this that seems to you and me
Must go its ordained way,
When all this age-old wait of ours
Has had its little day.
But this we know: that not again
Does soul go on alone,
When through the working of the Law
At last it finds its own.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Oh! Light-hearted birds that soar o'er the meadow;
Trilling your carols and praises to God;
Pause at the spot where my darling lies buried.
Sing your sweet anthem above the green sod,
To Olive.

Oh! Gossamer breeze that comes with the springtime
Thrilling the buds with your scented, soft, kiss;
Scarce stir the branches that cast their cool shadows
Over her cradle. I ask of you this,
For Olive.

Oh! Flowers that nod and smile in the sunlight;
And peacefully sleep in the moon's pale glow;
Bloom for the baby who sleeps there among you.
And over her grave like a canopy grow,
For Olive.

Oh! Winter's chill snow that falls 'mid the silence;
Robing the earth in its mantle of white;
Fall, oh, so softly; and cover not deeply
The grave of my baby out there tonight.
My Olive.

Oh, Angels of children! Hover about her.
And keep thy sweet vigil all through the night.
Let nothing disturb the rest of my baby
'Till dawns the swift coming Celestial Light,
For Olive.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Who are you, little stranger?
Whence came you? Whither goeth?
Who guided you across the pale?
Whose light your pathway showeth?
Who beckoned you from the Far Land
Beyond the azure sea;
And held you close and calmed your fears
As you came here to me?

I am what you are now, and were,
And evermore shall be.
I came across a star-lit course
Through space of mystery.
I go upon the self-same quest,
Along the self-same way,
As you and all shall ever go
Throughout eternity.

A spirit came and kissed my lips.
And whispered, in my sleep,
That I must start a journey soon
Across the depthless deep,
To a new life in a strange land
That was prepared for me.
Thus from God's bosom I was sent
To bless and blessed be.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

And, Oh, I pray all! Guard my soul
As I pass on my way.
And keep me pure and undefiled.
So, send me back some day
To the great God in His great home
Awaiting you and me!

NAMELESS
SONGS

Look, Mama! Look! Far up in the sky,
Up where our Margy is; up there so high;
God's lit His candles to burn through the night
In the rooms of His angels to give them some light.
There's one little candle there, Mama, I know
That burns for our Margy. Don't you think so?
Most ev'ry night when I lie here in bed,
And look out my window, far, far ahead,
I see Margy's candle burning so bright
I know it takes care of her all through the night.
Let my light burn, Mama, so don't you see?
I'll look at Margy and she'll look at me.

NAMELESS SONGS

Christmas Eve! The wistful faces!
Little lambs outside the fold.
How they haunt the lighted places
To-rehear the promise told.
How their hearts throb with the glory,
And their voices are subdued,
As their eyes reflect the story:
Broken faith with faith renewed.

Christmas Morn! The faded vision!
Little lips that cannot smile.
Hearts made sad with futile mission
As they sense the sorry guile.
Now they find, instead, a burden
Waiting for them at the door.
Ah! But their's the radiant guerdon
When their Shepherd counts them o'er.

NAMELESS
SONGS

It is the hour when comes the instant pause
Between the day that was and is to be.
But, in that moment, Thought—the First Great Cause,
Down through the years with swiftness carries me;
And, mirror like, it flashes on the screen
The things I thought obscured behind the veil;
And holds to view the things I thought unseen;
Yet comforts me where footsteps held the trail.

By this long road that stretches down the past,
'Tis thus I know how far my burden leads.
By things that stand as milestones 'till the last,
'Tis thus I know my gains,—my greater needs.
And as I face the duty and the lure
Of what to me the coming day will send,
I simply ask for strength that will endure
'Till with my cross I reach my journey's end.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Memory sits beside my door
As I go forth; when I return;
And reads the same scroll o'er and o'er
Whereon is writ the things that burn;
—The things that were; that might have been.

Amid the tumult of the day;
Amid the silence of the night;
The Shape intones the self-same lay
With voice that touches depth, not height;
—And face that does but leer and grin.

Nor will forget a single line;
Nor heed my plea to blot it out;
But each day adds each day of mine
And grants no benefit of doubt.
—And strikes no balance to my gain.

I know full well I gave it birth
And fed it on my life's own blood;
Else I would hate it,—spawn of earth,
And would engulf it in a flood
Of scalding tears born of my pain.

But I must wait 'till comes the day
When, Purpose served, I shall be free
To walk alone along my way.
And, starving for the want of me,
It shall at last feed on itself.

NAMELESS SONGS

Deep in a valley called the Past,
Where evening's shroud is ever hung;
And shadows flee the fearsome gloom;
There lie my dead, dear dead, unsung.

None know the place, nor one their own,
Save those who know the thing called Years.
None see my graves, nor those they dig,
Save those who vision through their tears.

At times I go there all alone
And lift a corner of the veil;
And call them forth from fitful sleep;
To listen to the self-same tale.

And see them glide with phantom shape
That to my soul a shudder brings,
As I look on with piteous gaze
At re-born, crippled, twisted, things.

Far up a path that points ahead
Where falls the fairy light of morn
With glancing spears of wondrous hue;
There are my hopes, my visions, born.

None see my shapes, nor have their own.
Save those who know the thing called Dreams.
None know my joy, nor sense the thrill;
Save those who know the real that seems.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

Each day I send my thoughts to them
To give them strength and bid them live;
And tell them o'er and o'er my plans
For all that Fate will surely give.

Then comes a day. I know it well,
And 'wait it with accustomed dread;
When they will call me, one by one,
To lay them with my unknown dead.

* * * *

As Life rolls up the finished scroll
Of all that was, and now is done;
Such phantom hopes as still remain
Perhaps, will call me; all, save one.

NAMELESS SONGS

Weeping skies and sullen seas;
Wild surf crashing on the shore;
Scudding clouds and bending trees;
Moaning winds across the moor;
Sobbing heart and pain that sears
Keep my lonely reverie.
Plea that throbs all down the years:
Love of mine, come back to me!

NAMELESS SONGS

Gray sky, and a chill wind driving
Weeping mists across the plain.
Sad heart, and a soul for shriving,
Keeping vigil through its pain.

Barren earth with bosom shrinking
After births of lavish things.
Dead love, and memory drinking
Bitter lees from visionings.

Gold dawn, and a breath caressing
Silvered dew upon the earth.
Glad heart, and a soul for blessing;
Pulsing with awakened mirth.

Throbbing soil with bosom swelling;
All-a-thrill with mystery.
Quickened faith; and lips re-telling
Love throughout eternity.

NAMELESS SONGS

Dear heart, oppressed!
Beyond the space dividing
Your soul from mine, my pledge of love holds true.
Across the depths,
Where unseen worlds are biding,
Unheard, unknown, my voice is calling you.

Mourn not, dear heart!
Nor fear our bond is failing.
Ere long I'll come to take your trembling hand,
As eye grows dim
And light of earth is paling,
To guide you to our ever, ever, land.

NAMELESS SONGS

Dear Heart! When spirit, straining at the bond
That holds it to its frame, shall seek release;
And hearing the clear call from the beyond
Shall start upon its quest for lasting peace;
We will be brave whoever goes before.
And with last kiss, whisper, one: "God speed thee!"
The other; "I'll be'waiting at the door
The heart I leave with you to bring to me."

NAMELESS SONGS

The gray day is the dead day,
When Nature spreads her pall
O'er biers where lie her pulseless clay;
The mist: her tears that fall;
The moaning wind: the sad lament
Of mother love denied;
The sobbing trees: the mourners' bent
O'er graves they stand beside.

The gray soul is the dead soul
That stalks with grim despair
Among the things that played their role;
And should lie buried there.
Its life: the spectres of the past;
Its love: a hollow thing;
Its sympathy: a chilling blast;
Its touch: a withering.

The white soul is the live soul
That transmutes gold from gray;
And thrives upon unstinted dole
It scatters on the way.
It sees the shadow as a dream
That breaks before the light
Of resurrected life agleam
With jewels from the night.

And

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

And so, the gloom is but a foil
'Gainst which our lives are set.
And some with radiance recoil;
And some sink deeper yet.
But all is as we'll have it be.
The colors are our own.
The canvas is our destiny.
The picture, our life's tone.

NAMELESS
SONGS

I ponder as I watch the azure sky;
So limpid that the softest filmy cloud
Seems like a mountain poised with stately head
Above the earth's horizon. And I try
To search its depthless vaults where hangs the shroud
Between what dies of earth and that not dead.

I wonder as I hear the thunder boom
With swelling roar that rends the quaking air,
As though with nostrils spurting blinding fire
Some Cosmic steed plunged through the road of Doom,
If I could trail the echoes to its lair
I'd find the crossing and behold desire.

NAMELESS SONGS

The music of the dance was dreamy low
With throbbing pulse of violins, and hearts;
Both instruments responding to the bow
Drawn by the master hands that knew their parts.

Time turned the glass to mark the witching hour
Now breathless in the van of coming day.
And strains as sweet as breath of fragrant flower
When wafted on a breeze now died away.

The dancers ceased to sway with careless grace;
No longer held by fascination's spell.
And all unseen crept back upon each face
The dread, with passing dream, they knew so well.

And there was tiresome Jester with his grin;
And perfumed Spark; and unctious Mountebank;
And Clown; and Fool; and weary Harlequin;
And King; and Sheik; and those of princely rank,

And there was Pompous Bailiff; and a Thief;
And misshaped Punch; and merry Cap and Bell;
And Liege-Man; Beggar; and a Bandit Chief;
And willing Page; and Fatted Seneschal.

And there was stately Queen; and dainty Maid:
And Sorceress; and lovely Aphrodite;
And Gypsy Girl; and noisy, reckless, Jade;
And Peri from the world of inner sight.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

And there was Hebe with her train of youth;
And Nautch Girl with her slender, clinging, grace;
And Mad Cap; Houri; Matron; and, forsooth,
A Magdalen who came from her own place.

And there they stood in motley garb and guise,
With jest and joke and meaning turn and thrust;
And 'waited flashing shafts from unveiled eyes
Of doubt, deceit, allurement, love, and trust.

And as they waited came the bugle call
To lay aside the cryptic domino
That had withstood attempts on part of all
To see the face of charmer; and to know.

And then there passed unseen among the throng
A Shade familiar there, though there unasked.
And what he saw there, he had known for long:
That only Magdalen was now unmasked.

NAMELESS
SONGS

I heard a message winging in the night.
It waned and swelled in power through the air,
As from some spiralled center taking flight
And circling upward to the Throne of Prayer.

The voice was plaintive and bespoke the woe
Of countless ages that have had their day;
Through which the sons of men have sought to know
The meaning of existence; and the way.

"Oh God! Wilt Thou but listen to the plea
That rises to my lips? Born of the years
And things deep graved upon my memory;
The fleeting joys; the longer lasting tears.

"Wilt Thou not lift the sorrow from my heart
And soothe the anguish that doth rend my soul?
Wilt Thou not draw the hanging veil apart,
If there be any path; and any Goal?"

And as I listened it did seem to me
That my own heart was throbbing with the pain;
And this was my own voice; and my own plea
That I had made so many times in vain.

And quivered then my body like a reed
That is attuned to vibrant harmony;
As through the air, impinged with light'ning speed,
A Voice responded with intensity.

"My

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

"My child! There is no sorrow in thy cup
If not remiss. Nor is there any woe.
There is no anguish if thy soul look up;
Nor tears, save those of joy. 'Tis even so!

"Dost mourn for one who goeth on before?
Wouldst know, before prepared, what that one saw?
Wouldst thou be keeper of the Mystic Door
And thy hand stay the working of the Law?

"Dost grieve that thou has suffered eartly loss?
I did not give it thee; thou called it thine.
And if it be thou cannot hold the dross;
Thy spirit loses naught. Oh, child of Mine!

"Wouldst have thy earthly garment pure and strong?
Wouldst give thy quickened conscience no remorse?
Wouldst thou be invincible against wrong?
Attune thy drooping spirit to its Source!

"Art thou remiss? Do thou make recompense
To injured one, and Me, before too late!
Not prayer alone nor burning of incense,
Shall render smooth thy pathway to the Gate!

"Turn thou the light of spirit on thy soul
And understand what thou dost ask of Me!
That I perform thy task? Make thy loss whole?
Relieve thy conscience of its misery?

"Restore

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

"Restore to thee the life thou didst not give?
Return to thee a love thou didst not know?
Remove the things I needst must have thee live
That thou shouldst reap whatever thou didst sow?

"Know, then, that thou art spirit, and the heir
Of Mine Own Spirit that doth flow from Me!
And, now, that thou shalt find the answer there
To all the doubts that are assailing thee!

"Take heed that thou dost read thy title clear
To all the power I have given thee;
And that thou learn to use it rightly here
And so prove worth a greater trust from Me!

"Hearken to My Spirit! Laugh on thy way!
Thy weaker brother help! To self be true!
Above self-pity rise! Await the day
When Spirit shall call spirit! Even you!"

NAMELESS SONGS

I 'wait the day when I shall know my power
To rise above my sense-restricted state;
And in that awesome, unutterable, hour
Myself then from its thrall emancipate.
And things be as they are; not as they seemed,
As wraith-like shadows gliding through the night.
And life that's lived as one that had been dreamed;
Against the real that opens to my sight.
Then shall the cleavage show the hidden line,
As I stand forth there naked and alone,
Between myself and this vain shell of mine;
Between the thing that dies; and, must atone.
And when this agonizing moment comes,
As spirit rends its future from the past,
Mine eyes shall see the web and warp and thrums
And know the pattern of my weave, at last;
And all I have to garb my naked soul
For its lone journey up the steep ascent
To Him Who'll sit in judgment on my scroll;
Nor judge alone the record; but, intent.

NAMELESS SONGS

Out of the sea, and bathed with a glory,
Come the vast hordes to America's shore;
Bursting with song and eager with story;
Pressed through the portals of Liberty's door.

From the old places to the new Homeland,
Like feverish streams that rush to converge;
Drawn from the edges to the Great Center;
They yield to the force of Cosmical urge.

With souls bursting bonds; hearts wildly throbbing;
Eyes deeply flaming with mystical fire;
Rising like hosts at call of the trumpets,
They move with the rythm of common desire.

Heirs of the mystic work of the fathers,
Supported by the Invisible Hand,
Building a shrine to hold forth a symbol
Of Peace and Equality in the new land.

Since those far days the torch has been blazing
Over the land where the humble adorn;
Where dross and alloy are fused together
And out of the mass a new race is born.

Aliens? Not they, but belated brothers
Whose feet bear the stains of wine presses trod;
Whose necks bear marks of yokes they've bent under;
And faces reflect a new faith in God.

NAMELESS SONGS

The sun marched over the earth's gray rim
And hurled his shafts afar.
He challenged night's fleeing cherubim
And veiled the evening star.

He mounted the East with regal mien,
Up from the Sunrise Strand.
He covered the earth with wondrous sheen;
And hailed the Sunset Land.

He ploughed a course through the ether sea;
And spread his golden wings.
He stirred the air with a reverie
That raised the gloom of things.

He carried two symbols on his breast;
Of Hope: the birth of day;
Of Faith that followed him down the West
Into the Unknown Way.

NAMELESS SONGS

Hark, My children!
Dost not hear My voice,
Through infinite depths,
To all thy harried lands,
Calling to you;
Pleading with you;
To cleanse thy blood-stained hands?

Pause, My children!
Dost not know the pain
Of patient suffering
My throbbing heart doth feel;
Every pang;
Every scream;
Every blow of steel?

Rise, My children!
Dost not know thy might?
Thou art not serfs of kings
But messengers of Mine;
To enforce right;
To enthrone peace;
To express love divine.

NAMELESS SONGS

As God and the Devil sat at bay
And gazed at a thing, called man;
The Devil said, in a crafty way:
"Win him from me, if you can."
And God just smiled and 'waited the day
The thing, called man, would awake
To the thing, called soul; and thing, called clay;
And himself deliver the stake.

Now the thing, called man, then made his choice;
For the Devil walked with him.
And they pledged their troth in lusty voice;
And entered the lists with vim.
They seemed a much misunderstood pair
As they went their merry way;
And did strange things with a jaunty air;
And whistled a sprightly lay.

The devil proved a rollicking chap;
And he nudged his mate in glee
Whenever he set a clever trap
And hid it where none could see.
And the course they laid was smooth and broad
Through ways of many delights.
But the days were short for all their fraud;
So they added to them the nights.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

And thus they travelled the primrose path
With never a carking care;
Nor bothered they with a day of wrath
For with them all prey was fair.
Now the things they did and things they said,
It were shameful to repeat.
And as they rambled, the life they led
Is a topic far from meet.

Then came a day when the thing, called man,
Sensed an unexpected fix;
This Devil of his, with much elan,
Had emptied his bag of tricks.
But part of him still clamored for more
Of what it had fed upon;
'Till it made the man exceeding sore
And he sat him down, anon.

And by his side sat the Devil down
And throwing a knowing wink
And mocking grin for his growing frown,
Said: "You're a quitter I think!"
Then up he rose, and he whirled about,
And he seemed to live an age;
And he smote the Devil and cast him out
In an overpowering rage.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

As toward a chasm and over the brink
Sailed the Devil out of sight,
Taunting words: "You're a quitter I think!"
Resounded again that night.
His fury rose; and he longed to crush;
But he woke up with a lurch;
Fell out of bed; and dressed in a rush;
And hurried himself to church.

NAMELESS SONGS

I only know what you know
Of this strange thing, called Life.
I only need what you need
Of strength to meet the strife.

I only feel what you feel
Of weakness on the way.
I only ask what you ask
Of others through the day.

I only weep what you weep
Of tears of bitterness.
I only love what you love
Of things that burn and bless.

I only see what you see
Of things behind the veil.
I only seek what you seek
Of life beyond the pale.

NAMELESS SONGS

Guardians of the silent brooding nights
Since from the Cosmic fires came the first crash
Of lightning arc that rent the walls of space,
And lit the heavens with the blinding flash;
And worlds began to whirl their tireless race
Through depthless vaults aglow with jewelled lights.

Sentinels of the endless march of years
Since primal man, affrighted, gazed on thee;
And started the long quest from out the past.
Proud thy lineage and thy destiny
To see the first race born and know the last;
And all their struggles, sorrows, faiths and fears.

Symbols of the ascent toward the goal,
The constant climb of souls to reach the heights.
Thy banners catch the flames of coming morn
And shaggy crests are bathed with dancing lights.
Serene thou art though tempest lashed and torn;
With sheltered hamlets clinging to thy stole.

Watch-Towers for those waiting through the years
To join the legions who have gone before,
'Till thou shalt see the sun fall down the West
And know thy doom as it shall rise no more.
Oh, from thy lute could giant fingers wrest
The Song of Triumph ringing from the spheres!

NAMELESS
SONGS

Have you yet stood beside the open grave
That seemed to long to take within its maw
The form of one you'd then give life to save
Against the ruthless working of the Law?

Have you yet felt upon your quaking heart
Relentless fingers of an icy hand
That with its clutch would sunder it apart,
And leave you as the dead one where you stand,

Have you yet heard the awful scraping sound
That shattered with a crash your throbbing brain
As one, still fair, was lowered in the ground
Amid the sobs so piteously vain?

Have you yet learned your moving lips were dumb;
And no one heard your agonizing plea
To hold your dead so that a respite come
That you could seek farewell as it should be?

Have you yet had a sob rise from your soul
Too late, and find its utterance denied;
And felt your heart expand beyond cajole;
And known at last the love so long denied?

This

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

This one thing heed: All this will come to you.
And in that solemn moment have it so,
As you live o'er the past, there's naught to do
Or be undone that does increase your woe.

And this thing know: If grave seem lonely there,
And damp and cold, it's only so to you;
For God has taken then unto His care
The spirit, and its worn out garment, too.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Welcome, My Friend! Draw up your chair
And join me at my fire.
Fill up your pipe. Take your full share
Of what meets your desire.
Have other needs I can supply?
I wait upon your word.
Ah! This is what the world can't buy;
Nor know the debt incurred.
Aye! Close your eyes and think with me
We need not speech to tell;
Nor ears to hear; nor eyes to see;
The things we know so well.
Here works a world-old mystery
For souls that are in tune:
That from the mind's uncharted sea
Should come communion's boon;
So that we sense as we sit here
The inter-play of Force
That means for us a Presence near
With tidings from its source.

* * * *

Good Night, My Friend! Nor time nor space
Has held us in its spell.
And there has come unto this place
What lips could never tell.
And like these embers' steady glow

NAMELESS
SONGS

Continued

There beams in you and me
A light that you and I both know;
Nor shines on land nor sea.
And when our fire shall turn to ash,
And ash return to earth,
Our souls shall to each other flash
The triumph of re-birth.

NAMELESS
SONGS

The long night! The solemn quest!
May God speed thee, fearless friend,
On thy way through silent places;
Through the aisles of darkened spaces;
'Till is reached thy journey's end
And thy tired soul finds its rest.

The vain sobs! The narrow bed!
Let those mourn now who need mourn;
And forget not in their weeping
That they failed thee, in their keeping,
But were faithful in their scorn
To the last word to be said.

The farewell! The silent tears!
Stands a presence by my side;
For I see a vision glowing,
As thou wert within my knowing
And God's mercy not denied.
This will consecrate the years.

NAMELESS SONGS

Night! And the lights go out,
One by one.
Peace as the silence comes.
Day is done.

Hush! For the earth is still.
Work is o'er.
Rest! For the burden needs
Thee no more.

Hark! For a voice now calls
Through the gloom.
Watch! For a soul goes forth
To its doom.

Dawn! And a new day lives.
Fear is past.
Sing! For a spirit knows
God at last.

NAMELESS
SONGS

Oh! Thou art a sentient thing;
Shell of mine!
And thou needs must have thy fling;
So thou shine.
And thou dost e'en mask thy face;
Through the day.
And thou findeth not thy place;
On thy way.
But thou drifteth here and there;
As in mist.
Though thou planneth with much care;
For thy grist.
And thou goeth with a dash;
In the crowd.
And thou stingeth like a lash;
And art loud.
And thou knoweth not thy quest;
Come the dusk.
But thou findeth then thy rest.
Thou art husk!

NAMELESS
SONGS

The blazing sphere that whirls on down the West
And for a moment leaves the sky aflame;
The day that woos the shadows bringing rest
And lures them out the East whence it, too, came;
The silver orb enthroned throughout the night
With eerie glow that's dimmed with morning's dawn;
The stars that lose their opalescent light
As from the sky the giant curtain's drawn;
The ebbing tide that passes out to sea
Beyond the sight of watchers on the shore;
The wind that leaps across the barren lea
'Till breathless is becalmed upon the moor;
The grass that withers on the shrinking earth
Whose bosom chills through lack of passion's fire;
The trees that stand like shells of former worth
With naked arms outstretched to grasp desire;
The flowers that drooping lose their fragrant breath
And close their nectar lips with patient sighs;
All things and lives that pass through change called Death
Have blazoned on their tombs: I shall arise!

NAMELESS SONGS

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